

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

**1. (Currently Amended)** A continuous process for the drying of polymers containing N or amino, ammonium or spirobicyclic ammonium groups, comprising cationic N-containing groups, and suitable counterions, which comprises continuously drying ~~the~~ gelled and washed, moist polymers obtained by polymerization, crosslinkage and optionally alkylation, using by injecting a gaseous medium under normal pressure or overpressure in into a fluidized bed, whereby polymer gel, which can have up to approximately 90% of bound water, is introduced continuously into the fluidized bed dryer, whereupon owing to the gaseous medium injected into said fluidized bed, moist polymer gel is loosened, then the formation of a constant fluidized bed occurs and finally sufficient dried polymer gel, which has a water content of 2 to 5%, is removed continuously from the fluidized bed dryer such that a constant amount of fluidized bed remains in the dryer.

**2. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 1, wherein the gaseous medium is heated to 40 to 250°C and injected into a fluidized bed dryer through a sieve bottom having a directed flow in the dryer outlet direction.

**3. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein the bed gaseous medium is injected into the fluidized bed dryer with a velocity of 0.02 m/sec to 3.5 m/sec.

**4. (Currently Amended)** The process as claimed in claim 2, wherein ~~the polymer gel, which can have up to approximately 90% of bound water, is introduced continuously into the fluidized bed dryer, whereupon owing to the gaseous medium injected in, loosening of the moist product and then the formation of a constant fluidized bed occurs and finally,~~ after a residence time of 5 to 12 h, sufficient dried polymer gel, which has a water content of 2 to 5%, is removed continuously from the fluidized bed dryer such that a constant amount of fluidized bed remains in the dryer.

**5. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein the polymer gel is heated to 60 to 120°C at the dryer exit.

**6. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein the moist nitrogen waste gas, which has a temperature from 70 to 100°C, is led with any polymer gel fines discharged from the fluidized bed, for the separation of the fine fraction through a filter situated in the dryer or through a cyclone separator having a fine filter connected in series, then led through a condenser, cooled to 5 to 35°C and then heated again to 40 to 250°C with 100% saturation and again led into the fluidized bed dryer.

**7. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein various temperature zones having different gas velocities are established in the dryer.

**8. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein the introduction of the product is carried out via a double pendulum flap, via a nibbler or a static sieve with a rotor.

**9. (Original)** The process as claimed in claim 4, wherein dried product is introduced into the dryer as a base layer.